

All the News That's Fit to Fabricate: AI-Generated Text as a Tool of Media Misinformation

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Abstract

Abstract Online misinformation has become a constant; only the way actors create and distribute that information is changing. Advances in artificial intelligence (AI) such as GPT-2 mean that actors can now synthetically generate text in ways that mimic the style and substance of human-created news stories. We carried out three original experiments to study whether these AI-generated texts are credible and can influence opinions on foreign policy. The first evaluated human perceptions of AI-generated text relative to an original story. The second investigated the interaction between partisanship and AI-generated news. The third examined the distributions of perceived credibility across different AI model sizes. We find that individuals are largely incapable of distinguishing between AI- and human-generated text; partisanship affects the perceived credibility of the story; and exposure to the text does little to change individuals' policy views. The findings have important implications in understanding AI in online misinformation campaigns.